

Our children, our families, our way

Guiding our children, our way

There are many Aboriginal people in Australia today. We live in different places and connect to family and country in different ways but we are all Aboriginal. Within all cultures there are differences in the way we live and there are differences in the way we parent our kids.

A long time ago our Elders helped us to learn things about all there was to know.

They taught us how to live properly, to love and respect what was around us, each other and ourselves, so that we would grow up to be good people.

All the things the Elders had to learn to survive, they did by doing, looking and listening.

Today, not much has changed in the way we pass on our beliefs to our kids, but the world around us has changed. The Elders are still here to teach us of the past as well as the teachings of today.

So we should come to learn and understand these new teachings. Our kids will be better for it, stronger, healthier and happier.

Your feelings

- As a parent you will have lots of different feelings—you might feel happy one day and sad the next, or loving one day and then angry or scared. Most parents feel tired and upset and guilty at some stage in bringing up kids. It is important to remember that most parents feel like this from time to time. You're not expected to be perfect and most of us feel pretty bad when we think we have made mistakes. If your feelings are making you feel really miserable or guilty, talk to someone.
- One of the best things you can do for your children is to feel good yourself ... that means looking after you!

- Take care of your adult relationships—with your husband, wife, partner or special friend.
- Make time to be alone together, do things you enjoy together, talk about things that happen to you, share interests or just be together. These times are really important.
- Sort out and try to fix the problems. It's hard being a parent when everything is going well—but much more difficult if things are going badly.
- If you have money problems, ill health, hassles at work or trouble in your home, you must try to sort out and fix the problem. By doing nothing and hoping it will go away usually only makes things worse. This might mean asking others to help you find a way to make it better.
- Every parent gets angry at some time and you might feel that you're 'losing it'. You might feel that everything is on top of you—the kids are playing up and you just don't know what to do and you get mad.
- Getting angry is a normal and healthy emotion. It becomes a problem when we are not able to manage it. The important thing is to deal with it in a way that won't hurt your family.
- Young parents can feel angry or 'put off' when their own parents try to tell them how to do things. It's easy to get annoyed and not want to hear anything. Sometimes other ideas might make it easier. Grandparents have had a lot of experience in the world, so listen, think about what they say, talk it over and then make up your mind what you'll do.

This tip sheet, along with the full set of Parenting WA guides, is available in electronic format at www.communities.wa.gov.au



These things might help

- Parenting is forever ... so take it easy.
- As a parent you have a big influence on your kid's life.
- All parents need help at some time.
- Find out the good ways to bring up your kids.
- Learn from mistakes and do things differently.
- Never be ashamed to ask for help or say you don't know what to do.
- Anger is a normal emotion—learn how to handle yours safely.
- Keep on believing in yourself.

Keep the old ways strong in our minds and our hearts.

Contacts

Parenting WA Line

A free 24/7 telephone information and support service for parents and children pre-birth to 18 years.

t: 1800 654 432 (free call)

w: www.communities.wa.gov.au

Department for Communities

Aboriginal Early Years – Best Start Program

Best Start is a state-wide program for Aboriginal parents and carers with young children from babies to five years old. Best Start Services are located in the following areas:

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| • Armadale | t: 08 9399 6489 |
| • Carnarvon | t: 08 9941 2105 |
| • Goldfields | t: 08 9093 3795 |
| • Hedland | t: 08 9172 3599 |
| • Mandurah | t: 08 9583 9802 |
| • Marble Bar | t: 0427 013 144 |
| • Midland | t: 08 9274 9411 |
| • Moora | t: 08 9651 1294 |
| • Mullewa | t: 0408 844 196 |
| • Narrogin | t: 08 9881 6693 |
| • Roebourne | t: 0438 926 558 |
| • South Lake | t: 0427 013 141 |

w: www.communities.wa.gov.au

Moorditj Yarning

Moorditj Yarning is an Aboriginal-specific program of Relationships Australia WA. Services include counselling, yarning around a broad range of issues and other programs that Aboriginal community identify as useful: women's art and craft groups, children's traditional and contemporary dance and men's groups.

t: 1300 364 277

w: www.wa.relationships.com.au

Look under "Services we provide" and then look under "Aboriginal services".

The Raising Children Network

Helps parents with the day-to-day decisions of raising children and looking after their own needs.

w: www.raisingchildren.net.au

This Guide uses 'he' and 'she' in turn. Change to suit your child's sex.

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This publication is available on request in other formats to assist people with special needs.

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